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■ AVIVA COMMUNITY FUND
Pelham ready for Canada AM

SARAH FERGUSON
Pelham News Staff

PELHAM — Mariah Bunz never thought her idea to build a skatepark in honour of Isaac Riehl would be a finalist in a countrywide competition.

But she had to try, even if it was a long shot.

see AVIVA | page 2

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SARAH FERGUSON Staff Photo

E.L. Crossley will welcome Canada AM on Jan. 29. Pictured from left are students Brooke Raven, Jared Rempel and Nick Loscavio, who helped Mariah Bunz with her submission to build a skatepark in memory of Grade 9 student Isaac Riehl to the Aviva Community Fund contest. Canada AM will announce the winners while at the school.



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upfront

■ **OBITUARY:** Local columnist battled with ALS

Arnie Dyker kept up his humour to the end

SARAH FERGUSON
PelhamNews Staff

PELHAM — Arnie Dyker will be remembered as a storyteller who kept his humour bright up until the end of his life.

Mr. Dyker, whose humour columns regularly appeared in *The Tribune* and its weekly *Pelham News*, died last Sunday after a short battle with Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). He was 65.

Having been diagnosed last September with ALS —

also known as Lou Gehrig's disease — Mr. Dyker always remained hopeful "until the very end," wife Barb Dyker said. "He loved life. He would get up every morning with a smile on his face and he would go to bed every night with a smile on his face."

The happily married couple of 34 years died together in north Pelham for the past 24 years.

Mr. Dyker had been submitting columns to *The Tribune* up until the time of his death.

"He has been writing for a long time," his wife said. "He was a story teller."

"It (writing) was a hobby that he took up when he loved spending his free time."

Using his innate sense of humour and his ability to tell a good story, Mr. Dyker was able to make people laugh.

"He was always a funny man."

Mr. Dyker was born in New Brunswick and moved with his family to Thorold when he was five years old.

He attended Thorold High School and later became a degree in chemistry from University of Waterloo. After attending university, he moved for work than a decade as a music manager and promoter. Some of his former clients include Neil Peart of Rush and local musicians Rob Lamothe and Vox Violins — all of whom he remained friends with, his wife said.

Later, he put his university degree to use and worked at GM as a chemist before he retired and took up writing.

"He was a unique man," his wife said of an athletic fellow who enjoyed running, golfing and spending time with his wife.

"He was a generous spirit. He would do anything for anyone — he was a loyal man."

Visitation for Mr. Dyker was held at Haine Funeral Home, 26 Ormond St. S., in Thorold, last weekend. The family is asking for donations to be made to the ALS Society of Canada.



Dyker

■ AVIVA

Fund winners will be announced at Crossley

FROM PAGE 1

As a reward for her efforts, all eyes will be on E.L. Crossley Secondary School Tuesday, Jan. 29, when *Canada AM* will announce the winners of the Aviva Community Fund contest, which is giving away \$1 million to ideas that bring about change.

The Rielie Skate Park in memory of the Crossley ninth-grader is among project finalists that will receive support from people who can online votes.

"This is absolutely incredible," says Buntz, a Grade 12 Crossley student.

"I first saw it (the Aviva Fund) on a TV commercial and



Rielie

right away that night I typed it into the computer to learn more about it."

The skatepark idea grew to be much more than an idea — it became a movement involving Isaac's friends and fellow classmates.

Although she didn't know Isaac personally, Buntz felt moved by what had happened to the 14-year-old. She wants to see the park built so youths have a place to go to be active and stay safe.

Isaac died last October, days after he was struck by a car while riding his longboard on Park Rd.

"I hope that he (Isaac) would be happy if he knew about it. From talking with his friends, I think it would mean the world to him," Buntz says.

I first saw it (the Aviva Fund) on a TV commercial and right away that night I typed it into the computer to learn more about it."

Mariah Buntz

"I would just like to give a big thank you to everyone (for supporting the project). I can't even express how

thankful I am."

Buntz says many of Isaac's friends have been involved, spreading word about need for a skatepark through social media websites, the news media and in school hallways.

If it wins funding, the Town of Pelham has pledged to match funds for the park, Mayor Dave Augustyn says.

The park's location has yet to be decided, but Augustyn says there are five options in the area: Peace Park and North Pelham Park, Fenwick's Centennial Park has also been touted.

"We are very, very hopeful (of winning) but we'll have

to wait and see," Augustyn says about Crossley's chances of winning the competition.

Having a national news outlet like *Canada AM* come to Pelham is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and should be shared with all of south Niagara — not just the Crossley community, Augustyn says.

"I encourage community members to come out and support the event."

More than 29 communities, including Pelham, will be visiting their breath to find out if they are one of the Aviva winners.

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■ CITIZENSHIP: 30 families take oath at Welland ceremony



SARAH FERGUSON Staff Photo

About 30 families and individuals celebrated becoming Canadian citizens at a ceremony at Centre de santé Communautaire, Thursday. Pictured from left are senior citizenship judge George Springate, Lauren Voronov, her mom Wendy Zhang, dad Maxim Voronov, RCMP Const. Norman Habel and Lisa Bastien who represented MP Malcolm Allen.

Proud to wave the Maple Leaf

SARAH FERGUSON
PelhamNews Staff

NEW CITIZENS

- Centre de santé Communautaire held its first citizenship ceremony of 2013 on Thursday.
- About 30 families received status as Canadian citizens.
- Of those 30 families, eight of them are French-speaking.
- According to the Government of Canada, an average of 160,000 individuals annually receive status as Canadian citizens.
- More than 1,900 citizenship ceremonies are held across the country each year.

WELLAND — As they raised their right hands in the air and held them there, they said a small but powerful oath.

They swore to bear true allegiance to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, queen of Canada.

They promised to faithfully obey the laws of Canada and they promised to fulfil their duties as new Canadian citizens.

On Thursday morning, 30 families, including eight French-speaking families, became Canadians in a bilingual ceremony held at Centre de santé Communautaire.

Official documents were presented by senior citizenship judge George

Springate. As he presented each individual and family with certificates, he congratulated them.

The certificate of citizenship presented to each person gives people the right to freedom of thought, the freedom of belief and the freedom of expression, among other rights, he said.

Maxim Voronov, his wife, Wendy Zhang and their two-year-old daughter Lauren, who live in Fonthill, are thrilled about their status as Canadians.

The couple from New Jersey moved to Fonthill so Voronov could teach business at Brock University. They have dedicated the past year to achieving their citizenship.

What moved them to become citizens was the desire for the right to vote.

“Being able to vote is important because it’s what we need to live in a democratic society,” Voronov said.

Colombia native Oscar Valbuena came to Canada in 2004 after living in the United States. Here he met his wife, Sara Flores, and they live happily in Welland.

His reasons for becoming a Canadian include better access to health care and employment opportunities.

“I came to Canada because there is an opportunity to have a better future for me and my family,” he said.

With his new status, Valbuena said he plans to celebrate by applying for his passport and travelling for the first time as a Canadian.

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■ SAFETY: Provincial money hoped for roadwork

Mayor pressing Pelham St. letter-writing campaign

SARAH FERGUSON
PelhamNews Staff

PELHAM — Dave Augusyn remains hopeful the town will be able to secure provincial funding to improve safety on Pelham St.

The mayor is asking Pelham residents to send letters supporting the project to Queen's Park, which announced last month that \$51 million is available through the Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative for “the most critical” roads, bridges, water and wastewater projects.

The town has applied for \$2 million, the maximum allowed for their project estimated to cost \$2.78 million.

Augusyn expects “strong competition” for the funding. There is a pre-screening process before a final application can be approved, which is why he is asking residents to write letters to the provincial government to think the Pelham St. project is important and their concerns.

A few years ago, Augusyn said, Glynn A. Green School parents requested town council increase safety of children walking to and from school along Pelham St. On average 10,000 vehicles drive past the school each day, the parents said.



Augusyn

The town earmarked \$2.5 million in future budgets to revamp the road — sidewalks, curbs, storm sewers water lines — but an engineering estimate came back at \$6.3 million.

“We just don’t have the funds to do it and this is a high priority project for residents,” Augusyn said.

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WHO TO CONTACT

Letters can be addressed to:
Municipal Infrastructure
Investment Secretariat
c/o Rural Programs Branch
Ontario Ministry of
Agriculture, Food & Rural

Affairs
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Sensible welfare reform

Say what you want about Tim Hudak's ideas. At least he's trying.

He's rolling out food for thought in the locked-down tight halls of Queen's Park.

While the government is paralyzed by the navel-gazing process of selecting a new leader for the Liberal Party, Premier Dalton McGuinty is posting with pandas in China. Hudak's putting forward a series of discussion papers on where he'd like to take the province.

Some of his suggestions are provocative, some are ho-hum. Some make a lot of sense.

His white paper on welfare reform last week was all that and more. What makes sense is his proposal for a debit card for the delivery of benefits.

That way, taxpayers can be sure the money paid to welfare recipients actually goes for food to feed the hungry mouths of children.

Hudak stopped short of saying he'd ask for drug testing for welfare recipients, but he did say the cards couldn't be used to buy booze or cigarettes.

He also urged greater accountability for welfare money. There are those who'll tell you this is a 17-year-old rehash of Mike Harris's Common Sense Revolution. That's nonsense.

There's a solid basis to these reforms. They come not from an extreme right, but from the very people the government commissioned to find solutions to our financial and social problems.

Hudak proposes replacing Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program with one program and allowing welfare recipients to keep more money they earn through working.

Those suggestions are lifted directly from the Don Drummond report on transforming the province's finances and from the report by former NDP cabinet minister and head of the United Way, Frances Lankin and Michael Sherk, on the people you associate with fair social service policies.

We welcome Hudak's thoughtful approach to issues and find it ironic that the people who slammed him for not having a detailed platform last time around are criticizing him for having a plan now.

Even more hypocritical is Community and Social Services Minister Jim Milloy, who slammed the Tory white paper, saying Hudak giving for advice on welfare was like "Going to Kim Kardashian for marriage tips."

That makes a case sound bite, but since his government appointed Drummond, Lankin and Sherk, you have to wonder why.

We just sit at Liberals' own work-for-welfare program — cushy jobs to keep their friends employed?

After Milloy's response, what other conclusion can we come to? The reports commissioned by the Liberals seem more like window dressing to hull voters into the false notion that the government is doing something — just don't ask them to implement their recommendations.

It's little wonder we're drowning in a \$14-billion deficit. For that reason, Hudak's proposed welfare reforms are a welcome change to help tackle our fiscal woes.

And he is giving us plenty to think about before the next election.

comment

■ LETTER:

Kinsmen thankful for community support

The Fonthill Kinsmen would like to thank all of you who supported our recent Craft Show at Centennial Secondary School in October.

Your generosity has allowed us to provide financial support to Community Living of Welland and Pelham, Our Lives Count, Women's Place of South Niagara, and St. Kevin's Food Bank.

Planning is under way for our next craft show in 2013.

For information check our website at www.fonthillkinsmen.ca or call 905-346-8288 and leave a message and call back number.

In closing, our support and appreciation is an encouragement to us as we continue to strive to, serve our community's greatest needs.

John Twomey
Fonthill Kinsmen

■ COLUMN

A little plainly-worded ideology might be good for Canadian politics

A Bloc Québécois press release informs me "The federal government refuses to see the consequences of its ideological reform of Employment Insurance." Now I know what you're thinking. "To hell with that! Blah Blah Blah!" To which I can only reply, "I'm sorry, but I'm not going to be the one to break the news to you." I've been issuing press releases, What I can't explain, though, is what it thinks it means by "ideological".

Other than "bad", I mean. But if that's all the word conveys, why not save yourselves five syllables (OK, three in the original French, from "idéologique" to "mauvais")? And if none, please try to explain what it actually means.

What the political philosophy behind these reforms instead of hurling polysyllabic mud at them. Now if it were only that we could stop with a slide "Is that thing still around?" But this vacantly pejorative use of "ideological" is chronic in Canadian politics and it matters. I happened to visit Martha Hall Findlay's website to see why she wants to be leader of the Liberal Party and (arguably an unrelated

■ LIONS GIVE BACK



PELHAM NEWS PHOTO

Recently, Fonthill Lioness President Eleanor Arbour presented \$700 worth of toys, gift cards, mitts and hats to Jane Gilmour and Colleen McCarthy of Pelham Cares which was distributed to families in need at Christmas.



JOHN ROBSON
OPINION

ambition) Prime Minister. I sound, from her Oct. 14 speech declared her credo: "Canada must have intelligent government, acting to achieve real solutions, not based on some ideology or for domestic political advantage."

I'll take intelligent government when I can get it and I yield to no one when it comes to preferring real solutions to the false kind. I also wish the government's domestic political advantage was the result of policy success not a substitute for it. But what can she possibly mean in insisting on real solutions "not based on some ideology?"

Ah, well. "To lead Canada again, the Liberal Party must prove to Canadians that it, too, is smart, with policies based, not on some outdated view of what is 'right' or 'left' or even

some undefined 'centre,' but on evidence — on facts. Based on an understanding of economics, global markets, investment — and people." Which is as foolish as it is unoriginal.

What can "an understanding of economics," or of "people" even begin to mean without a coherent, identifiable political philosophy? I mean, Ms. Hall Findlay understands economics, so I can judge what policies she might adopt in unforeseen circumstances. I don't want her to start reeling off "facts" about, say, sorghum production in East Asia. I want to hear what basic principles, after studying the evidence, she believes explain how the world works and underpin sound policy. Her ideology is irrelevant.

It's particularly engrossing today because a major objection to the Harper administration, at least from my direction, is it has no discernible "ideology," no identifiable set of political principles from which it consistently develops policies. Unless, of course, you consider "vote-for-me-in-return-for-moneyism" an ideology.

Outside politics, Stephen

Harper was a libertarian. In opposition, he stood for limited government. But his Doppelganger at 24 Sussex is a maddeningly big spender outrageously willing to offer subsidies and tax breaks to any canaryseed farmer, venture capitalist or arena-goer who might respond by voting Tory. I mean, really! Harper's other than limited government one some of his adversaries still ascribe to him despite his record or an articulate big-government one, people across the spectrum could try to have a rational debate about it. Instead we struggle to apply a philosophically consistent critique to incompletely understood policies justified by rhetoric devoid of content and unrelated to action.

What Canada actually needs is "real solutions based on some ideology." Of course it matters which one. But we can't even debate that until we stop resisting principled thinking on misguided principle, or because "ideological" makes such a handy one-size-fits-all insult for blockheads across the spectrum.

■ COLUMN: What's happening at the library

January is the time to take advantage of programs

Each month, Fran Giles of the Pelham Public Library, will inform readers about events, programs and new resources available at the library.

As most residents know, the Pelham Library consists of two branches. The Fonthill branch is, of course, in Fonthill and the Maple Acre branch is in the centre of Pelham.

But as you shall see, the library is a go-ahead place.

There's plenty of fun to be had and January is the best time for learning about what the library has to offer and sign up for courses and programs for the first quarter of the year.

In addition to our regular children's storytimes, we have special get-togethers such as Crazy for Lego for children ages four and up as well as Coconuts.

Club for children in Grades 5 to 8. There's also crazy activities to keep the kids occupied during March Break such as Crazy for Shrek, an all-ages event, or Crazy Curly Scarf Making for children ages nine and up. These are just a taste of the many things on offer for children.

For adults of any age there are book clubs and bridge, computer advice

and gadget clinics, crocheting and meditation, financial planning and geocaching.

During the month of February, which is Black History Month, award-winning author Bryan Prince will be speaking on the Underground Railroad and the history of slavery with special reference to Canada.

Sign up soon for any of these upcoming programs to avoid disappointment.

It's not too soon to donate books for our sale in March, but please do not donate encyclopedias, magazines or textbooks, please. And while you're sorting

your books, we also need clothes in good condition for our sale in April.

People can start books and clothes and later on sell them at a reasonable price to local hero and volunteers.

In my next column, I'll talk about books available at the library, both new arrivals and older ones worth looking at again, as well as how the library is coping with technology change.

For more information about the Pelham Public Library, call the Fonthill branch at 905-892-6443 or the Maple Acre branch at 905-892-5226.

HEARTY MEALS



PELHAM NEWS PHOTO

The Fonthill Lions Club donated \$750 worth of fresh turkeys for the 2012 Christmas Food Hampers distributed by Pelham Cares. These funds were raised from the recent Turkey Raffle. Pictured from left to right are Lions members Terry Boegel, Lion Fred Arbour, Colleen McCarthy from Pelham Cares and Ted Guila.

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A study in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition found that krill oil was highly effective at reducing arthritis symptoms and inflammation.

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For more info about Krill Oil, visit Rosemary's Natural Choices

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BOB TYMCZYZYN QMI Agency Niagara
Interim chief Sue Matthews outlines the budget plans for the Niagara Health System on Thursday. They are trying to reduce a \$13-million deficit through attrition and internal cost savings...

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■ **HEALTH CARE:** Hospital system must balance budget by March

NHS attacks \$13M deficit

GRANT LAFLECHE
QMI Agency Niagara

ST. CATHARINES —

The plan to cut Niagara Health System's \$13-million deficit was finally unveiled last Thursday, and hospital brass say cost-cutting measures won't include the loss of beds, deep cuts in nursing staff or reductions in programming.

Interim NHS president and CEO Sue Matthews said the hospital system will find other methods to cut money and raise revenue, including boosting parking fees, reducing redundant procedures and eliminating some vacant jobs.

"We don't know exactly how this will turn out, but we are working with our unions to minimize the actual number of layoffs," she said, indicating early retirements, filling only some vacant posts and providing incentives for those who want to leave the organization should mitigate job losses.

The last time the NHS went through this kind of cost-cutting effort, in 2009, only five jobs were eliminated. Matthews said even after this round of cuts, the number of vacant posts and hopes to save some money by downsizing staff, the NHS will continue to hire clinical positions, including nurses and doctors.

"Patient care remains our No. 1 priority," she said.

The NHS has been grappling with its large operating deficit since last spring. Officials originally suggested it might have to eliminate beds to save money, but ultimately opted to find savings internally rather than reducing beds or programming.

The hospital system must have a plan in action by March, Matthews said, because provincial regula-



Patient care remains our No. 1 priority."

Sue Matthews, interim NHS president and CEO

2011, the NHS instituted an aggressive infection control policy, with enhanced measures in place to prevent outbreaks. Superbug outbreaks, infection control experts said the NHS those measures were not needed on a constant basis, because it doesn't produce results and is expensive. Matthews said the NHS is now heading that advice.

Where the remaining \$3 million in savings will come from is still to be determined, but some savings can be found by working with staff and their respective unions. In particular, she said, the NHS must tackle overtime and sick time costs. The NHS reduced sick time costs by \$1.5 million but has had less success with overtime. Still, Matthews said staff is trying to help, juggling shifts to avoid overtime costs that have run as high as \$4.5 million some years.

Also of concern, according to NHS officials, are wage increases expected to take effect for some staff in April.

Hospital unions negotiate their contracts with the province, not the individual hospitals, and the hospital tries to control costs it is also bound by the terms of collective agreements.

The current deficit situation has been building for a few years. The NHS had projected small deficits from 2010 to 2013, and pledged to balance its books by this year.

"We expected funding increases from the province did not materialize and rising expenses, the cost of controlling the C. difficile outbreak and new infection control measures, along with systemic overtime and sick time programs, created the current situation."

■ SOCIAL SERVICES: \$1.9 million in one-time funding made available

Grant could extend benefit to disabled

JEFF BOLICHOWSKI
QMI Agency Niagara

THOROLD — People with developmental or physical disabilities might get a bit of help as Niagara Region mulls over how to spend nearly \$1.9 million in one-time social services funding.

The money was handed down by the province late last year to help the region change over from the loss of the Community Start-Up Allowance, a benefit, a key housing fund drawn on by the needy in emergencies.

A memo that headed to regional last night noted the money could be put toward expanding the benefit — which is being covered by the region this year — to the disabled.

Ontario Disability Support Payment recipients were left out when regional council approved a housing plan last November, but the piggy money changes the situation, said community services commissioner Katherine Chislett.

"If we had the money, we would've helped those folks. We have the money now," she said.

She said regional council's public health and social services committee will get a report Jan. 29 detailing what it can do with the money.

She said one of the options would be using it to help the disabled.

The region spent much of last fall wrestling with the devastating cut to the benefit, which is drawn off often by the need to cover emergency expenses or last month's rent payments. The province axed it when it switched to a new funding model, slashing funding for the region by \$200 — a \$2.6-million hit.

The province eventually gave ground in the face of intense lobbying efforts and announced the one-time funding just after Christmas, days before the benefit was set to expire.

"We got a little plus. We're still minus," Chislett said. "It doesn't entirely bridge the gap."

She said the region is still piecing together its final proposal, but helping the disabled would be among the recommendations.

It's the one YWCA Niagara executive director Elisabeth Zimmermann is hoping for.

"I think it's a great move. It's



what I was hoping to see, that they would reinstate it for ODSP," she said.

She said it's too early in the year to gauge the impact from the elimination of the benefit. But while she praised the one-time funding, she said she's concerned it's still only transitional cash.

Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold executive

director Betty-Lou Souter said putting the money toward the disabled would be ideal.

"I would certainly think it's going

to get us back to, not quite where we were before, but close."

jeff.bolichowski@sunmedia.ca



Supplied Photo

Betty-Lou Souter, Community Care of St. Catharines and Thorold executive director

Dr. Kimberly Dobson



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■ JUBILEE MEDAL: Queen's office responds

Edyth Phillips' royal letter

VICTORIA GRAY
PelhamNews Staff

FORT ERIE — Writing a

letter to the Queen of the British Commonwealth may seem "cheeky" to some, but to staunch loyalist Edyth Phillips a note to Queen

Elizabeth II was a natural thing to do.

What came as a bit of a surprise was the response sent back

to Phillips, from one of Queen Elizabeth's ladies-in-waiting.

Phillips, an 89-year-old originally from Welland who now lives in Gilmore Lodge Retirement Home in Fort Erie, was presented with a Diamond Jubilee Medal in September.

Welland MP Malcolm Allen visited her in the Port Colborne Hospital to give her the medal because she had pneumonia at the time.

"I was very, very honoured to receive the medal so, I thought I would write the Queen to thank her," she said.

She sent the queen a short letter thanking her and also told her that she had gone to Niagara Falls in 1939 to see the Queen's parents, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, when they visited.

She also enclosed a few pictures of the occasion in Niagara Falls and of herself receiving the award.

She has always had a keen interest in the royal family because her grandparents were all from England and spoke of their birthplace often.

Phillips always enjoyed learning about British history in school and kept a scrapbook of pictures of the royal family and Queen in their lives when she was growing up.

She was aware a residence from the palace might come — not from the Queen of course, but from one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting — because Queen Elizabeth often speaks of correspondence with

loyalists around the world in her public addresses.

The short missive, dated Jan. 4, 2013, came from Sandringham House, the Queen's country retreat.

The letter thanked Phillips for her loyalty and thoughtfulness.

"The Queen wished me to write and thank you very much for your letter and the charming photograph you enclosed for Her Majesty's eyes. The Queen greatly appreciated the letter, especially when you expressed, and was interested to hear your recollections from all those years ago."

A thank-you card was also enclosed with various pictures of the Queen throughout her reign.

"My daughters thought it was quite cheeky of me to write to the Queen," Phillips said. "They were shocked when a letter came back."

Phillips received the award for more than 60 years of service to the Summerlea Community Association in Welland.

She kept scrapbooks of events in the neighbourhood and pictures of the Summerlea subdivision as it was built and at neighbourhood events.

She was also president for a few years and was a long-time active member.

The community was designed for veterans after the Second World War and has steadily grown.

*victoria.gray@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @VixeyG*

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VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo

Edyth Phillips wrote a letter to Queen Elizabeth II to thank her after Phillips received a Diamond Jubilee Medal and received a reply.

■ TOWN COUNCIL: Three make the perfect grade

Perfect attendance for Pelham politicians

SARAH FERGUSON
PelhamNews Staff

PELHAM — It was a perfect attendance record in 2012 for Pelham Mayor Dave Augustyn and Ward 1 Coun. Richard Rybiak and Ward 3 Coun. John Durley.

According to town clerk Nancy Bozzato, out of 28 meetings, which includes both regular council and special meetings, Ward 1 Coun. Larry Clark and Ward 2 Coun. Gary

Accursi missed the least amount. Both councillors missed two meetings.

Ward 3 Coun. Papp was marked absent for four town meetings and Ward 2 Coun. Catherine King missed five.

Out of his six years in office, Augustyn believes he has only missed one or two meetings.

"I take council meetings very seriously, as do all council members," he said.

Looking back at 2012, Augustyn said he was pleased with the council and the involvement of councillors in the community.

At times, there are two- to three-week gaps between regular council meetings, and special meetings are called to deal with land, education or other matters because there isn't enough time to handle all matters council needs to discuss during regular meetings.

Augustyn said that usually when

councillors aren't in attendance it's during a special meeting and it's because of personal or work-related commitments.

"Sometimes we walk into special meetings knowing that not everyone can be there."

But, he said, the urgency of some matters do require special unscheduled meetings to be called.

sarah.ferguson@sunmedia.ca



Rybiak

Durley

■ EDUCATION: Two elected officials absent for one-third of school board meetings in 2012

Catholic trustees missing school board meetings

VICTORIA GRAY
PelhamNews Staff

WELLAND — Some Niagara Catholic District School Board trustees are missing meetings.



We'd love everybody to be there every meeting, but sometimes personal life does take precedence."

Board chair Kathy Burnik

Attendance figures for 2012 board meetings were analyzed by Pelham News. While some trustees have strong records, others do not.

Trustees Frank Fera and Ed Nieuwsteeg — who both represent Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake — were among the worst offenders in terms of 2012 "excused absences."

Both were absent from six of 18 board meetings in 2012 according to meeting minutes posted on the board's web site.

Nieuwsteeg was also not at four committee-of-the-whole meetings while Fera was absent from three.

Fera, who had knee replacement surgery last May and missed three meetings. He also spends a lot of time during the winter months in Florida.

"Usually I wouldn't miss any. I tried to make most of them, but in this case it was because of the surgery," he said.

Nieuwsteeg, who owns Patterson Funeral Home in Niagara Falls, said when he misses meetings it's work-related.

"Many visitations happen at night and sometimes there are staffing issues," he said. "For the most part my attendance over the last 14 years has been pretty high."

The board had 21 scheduled board meetings and met at 10 committee-of-the-whole meetings in 2012, but the minutes for three December meetings have not been approved by council and are not online.

Trustee chair Kathy Burnik, a St. Catharines trustee who did not miss a meeting, said trustees are excused from meetings for personal reasons by motion if the trustee informed the board they would be absent.

"It's extremely important to be at the meeting, but it's also

extremely understood that it's a position where sometimes life gets in the way," she said.

Although many trustees only missed one or two meetings, the board only managed to have full attendance at six meetings — one-third.

The chair was paid \$16,900, the vice-chair \$13,777 and individual trustees were paid \$10,784 in 2012.

Burnik doesn't think there's an attendance problem at board or committee-of-the-whole meetings because she said it's understood that sometimes people can't make them.

"Overall of eight trustees — who are extremely busy folks — we've done a great job of representing the interests of the public," she said. "We'd love everybody to be there every meeting, but

sometimes personal life does take precedence."

She said trustees are only excused for good personal reasons and if board members were absent (without informing the board) for three meetings the board could impose sanctions. But that does not apply to excused members.

victoria.gray@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @VixeyG

BY THE NUMBERS

Trustee/board meetings and committee-of-the-whole meetings missed

- Total 18 / 10 meetings
- Ted O'Leary (Welland): 1 / 0
- Dino Sicoli (Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Wainfleet): 3 / 1
- Frank Fera (Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake): 6 / 3
- Ed Nieuwsteeg (Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake): 6 / 4
- Kathy Burnik (St. Catharines), chair: 0 / 0
- Maurice Charbonneau (St. Catharines), vice-chair: 2 / 1
- Rhianon Burkholder (Thorold/Merriton): 1 / 0

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Mossimo's Black Panthers peewees were the champions of the Jordan Christmas House League Tournament held Jan. 3 to 5 at Jordan Arena. Pictured from left to right are (front) Tristan Barnhart, Zach Baltrusunas, Nick Youldass, Deen Coates, Ethan Guitard, (middle row) Nick Chambers, Jeremy Pollard, Robbie Harper, (back row) Coach John Pollard, Hayden Stewart, Reid Murray, Braeden Prout, Coach Joel Barnhart, Coach Greg Chambers, and Dan Durkin.

■ **HOCKEY:** Sharks defeat Jordan Blackhawks 3-2 in final round

Determined McDonalds Atomic Sharks win tourney

For PelhamNews

the first period.

Netminder Kyle Ring was tested early and often and held the team in the game. The momentum shifted in the second period with goals from Benjamin Shirton. By the end of the second period, the Sharks had a 3-1 lead. In the third period Van Vliet scored to put the game away and the Sharks advanced to the finals with a 4-2 win.

Heading into the second round of the tournament, the atom Sharks played the Jordan Canadians. The Sharks worked hard and had numerous chances to score but they were unable to beat the Canadians goaltender.

At the

buzzer

the

score

was

4-2

for the

Canadians.

Battista and Jacob Robins

picked up the

points for the

Sharks.

They returned

to the arena

for their final preliminary

round game.

It was clear by the board

that the sharks

would have to

win all

periods of this game in order to advance

in the dressing room, the players were

eager to win.

The Sharks

took control of the game

against the Grimsby Jets

from the drop

of the puck.

Benjamin Shirton

and Jacob

Robins

scored in its

pivotal match.

Van Vliet

also scored

in the

first

period with the first of his four

goals on the afternoon.

The game

would

end to the sharks

delight with a 9-2 win.

With the

victory,

the Sharks

headed to

the semi

final

game

next morning

against the

Grimsby Red

Rockets.

The game had

a fast pace to it with snipe Jacob Robins

scoring to get the Sharks on the board in

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Pelham water safety video earns nod



Supplied Photo

The Town of Pelham's aquatic staff made a submission to the Lifesaving Society of Ontario's annual Lifesaving Short Video Contest and won second place. Pictured from left, front row, Camille Peplinski, Katie Lewis and Chantal Christian. Middle, Jacob Bosnic, Paul Ferrara, Ali Goossen, Conner Pepper, Back row, Chris Russell, Andrew Coyne, Rachel Kirkup, Andrea Mannell, Rachel Durkin.

SARAH FERGUSON
PelhamNews Staff

PELHAM — A Town of Pelham water safety video produced by pool staff has won second place in the Lifesaving Society of Ontario's Lifesaving Short Video Contest.

Using music from various artists, the aquatic staff wrote their own lyrics promoting water safety, before they planned scenes and shot the three-minute video at the town's pool in Marlene Stewart Street Park.

When they were finished, the aquatic staff had produced

a musical detailing the importance of swimming with a buddy, said Andrea Mannell, the town's aquatic supervisor for 2012.

Mannell added she is proud of the video, which is called *Swim with a Buddy*.

The results of the contest on the Lifesaving Society's Facebook page list City of Brampton aquatic staff as winners of the contest, followed by Pelham then the City of Toronto.

Top prize was a \$100 pizza party and bragging rights for second and third place winners.

Mannell said she was thrilled Pelham was honoured in the competition because at the point of it was to increase awareness about water safety. She reminds everyone to stay safe and think about water safety in the coming summer months.

"Depending on their age, children should come with a buddy to swim with, if not an adult."

To view the video visit www.youtube.com and search "Town of Pelham: Musical: Swim with a Buddy".

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News Might Make Markets Volatile for the Short Term



Larry J. Gallant
FINANCIAL VIEW
ADVERTORIAL

The RRSP contribution deadline for the 2012 tax year is Friday March 1st. For many Canadians, investing has not been an enjoyable experience over the past few years. Perhaps you're one of them. After all, we've seen a lot of troubling news that makes the average investor leery about putting their hard-earned money into investments that have not met expectations. Much of this has to do with a market that can seem out of control with headline after headline of doom and gloom.

Take the U.S. Fiscal Cliff as an example. Leading up to the year end, we saw the markets under pressure as the

deadline to deal with the U.S. temporary payroll tax cuts loomed. It meant the end of certain tax breaks for businesses, a rollback of the "Bush tax cuts" from 2001-2003, and the beginning of taxes related to President Obama's health care law. Over 1,000 government programs - including the defense budget and Medicare were in line for deep, automatic cuts. With an 11th hour deal, the Fiscal Cliff was avoided and the North American markets responded in a positive way.

Now, news of the U.S. Debt Ceiling will affect the markets in the next few weeks. What is the U.S. Debt Ceiling? It's a cap set by U.S. Congress on the amount of money the federal government may borrow. The limit applies to debt owed to the public through U.S. bond issues, plus debt that the Treasury owes to

government trust funds such as those for Social Security and Medicare. This must be resolved by February 15th but no later than March 1st. As we approach these dates, we will no doubt see further pressure on North American markets.

"The U.S. Debt Ceiling will affect the markets in the next few weeks"

So what's to be done with your Investment or R.R.S.P. account, including R.R.S.P. contributions made between now and the March 1st deadline? That's where an Independent Financial Advisor can make a huge impact on your Investment portfolio. As an Independent Financial Advisor, I can help you decide the very best place to invest now and in the future to make sure your portfolio remains stable in an unstable environment. Through

unbiased advice, I can create a plan and tailor a portfolio that has the best chance to meet or exceed your goals within your risk tolerance. That's the best formula for a successful investing experience! To arrange a free no obligation review of your portfolio or to discuss this article, email larry.gallant@queensbury.com, call me at 905-892-2100 or visit my website at www.gallantfinancial.ca.

Larry J. Gallant is an Independent Financial Advisor with Queensbury Securities Inc., a member of the Canadian Investment Protection Fund and the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada.

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disappear and within a week it was completely gone - as if it was never there." Ian goes on, "This coming from a woman whose painful joints and ongoing sciatica were so bad just one week earlier, that the pain was unbearable but now has completely subsided." By now you are probably wondering what is LeafSource and why is it so effective? LeafSource is a 100% natural product derived from a proprietary organic mineral composite with over ten years of university research. LeafSource helps regulate the inflammatory process and the body's ability to repair itself. The vast majority (70 - 80%) of the population over the age of 50 have joint problems - often called osteoarthritis. This is due to the natural (or unnatural) wear and tear on joint tissue

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develops through the aging process. With joint inflammation, movement is limited and pain can be constant. LeafSource seems to have the ability to help people get their mobility and zest for life back. Millions of people seek treatment for their joint and inflammation problems by resorting to expensive, toxic prescription drugs (i.e. NSAIDs) with multiple side effects. These range from nausea and vomiting to serious intestinal disorders (bleeding, gas, pain) and even kidney and liver failure. Isn't that too large a price to pay for a little pain relief? LeafSource is a safe alternative to these destructive anti-inflammatory drugs that cause more problems than they solve. There are absolutely no side effects and it doesn't interfere with any other medications. Controlled experiments and observations have revealed that LeafSource is a potent anti-inflammatory that has been shown to bring a reduction to inflammation and pain within a few days. People notice great results in terms of more energy and less pain by taking anywhere from 2 to 6 capsules/day. Typical maintenance is usually 1 capsule twice daily. This product gets results! LeafSource is scientifically validated through more than 10 years of research at 4 universities, including the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Mercer University. Aside from its incredible

anti-inflammatory and pain reducing ability, it has also been shown to improve the performance of your daily nutrition and vitamin programs. It helps increase the absorption of vital nutrients, which in turn helps these nutrients work better. Better absorption = better results! It's almost as if they have become supercharged! LeafSource has also been shown to help enhance energy levels, improve intestinal health, strengthen hair, skin and nails and improve immune function. To see someone go from intense pain to a new lease on life within a week is truly incredible. Imagine being able to move freely without pain. Who wouldn't want to get out of bed in the morning with more energy? It's amazing how much of this stuff we take for granted, until it's gone! Ian adds, "I often recommend that LeafSource be taken with other natural joint products in order to help them work better and provide even faster relief. One of the things I hear most often from people who have tried LeafSource is they just plain feel better, have more energy and less pain. We're so confident, we guarantee LeafSource 100%! That alone should be enough to try this incredible product."



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